



530.938-5910

February 13, 2006

800 College Avenue Weed, CA 96094

www.mctv15.org

In the Matter of Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 as amended by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, MB Docket No. 05-311.

Please enter the following as public comment for the above matter:

I am Audra Gibson, current and founding board member of MCTV15 Inc., a non-profit public benefit organization managing the public access station for the northern California cities of Mt. Shasta, Weed and Dunsmuir. I am a former mayor and council member of Mt. Shasta City and currently also serve as the government liaison for the PEG station. Funding for our operations employing a part time manager comes in part from franchise fees paid by the cities to MCTV15, Inc. Without a portion of the franchise funding, we would not be able to operate. In addition, in communities like ours, franchise fees become part of the general fund providing dollars for critical city services. It is no secret that over time funding cuts from the federal and state budgets have placed local government in a hardship to provide for basic public services. Franchise fees should be used to support public access but often must be diverted to pay for other city services. Franchise fees provide critical funding in our area.

In our communities, the noncommercial PEG station airs all city council and planning commission meetings, keeping our area residents apprised of issues and concerns. The station partners with the College of the Siskiyous, a two-year public community college in our area. At our on-campus studio facilities we produced over 200 local shows in 2005 and look for more this coming year. These productions highlight educational programs such as how to locate funding for higher education, US Forest Service fire prevention and recreational programs, talk shows about local issues and special events and much more. We aim to inform our local residents of all ages and visitors as well. The local television medium connects our communities in a unique and fun way, involving community volunteers of all ages.

MCTV15 provides the only coverage of local government meetings; airing all live on location from each of the three cities we serve. Eliminating PEG will

reduce the opportunity for citizens to stay informed about local government issues.

Because of our success and co location on the Community college campus, the public can affordably access the tools and training to produce their own programming and to express their own point-of-view through the media. This is the backbone of our mission and what community access television is all about.

Democracy works best when the widest range of ideas and opinions are circulated. PEG TV is a rich “marketplace of ideas”, and plays an important role in our democracy and as a community service. **Franchise fees are a critical part of our local budgets, public access and city services alike.**

Thank you for your consideration,

Audra Gibson
530.926.5966

cc: Manager and City Council members, City of Mt. Shasta, City of Weed, City of Dunsmuir, CA